



Summer 2000

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Planning Underway for New Bond Issues

What do the people of Broken Arrow rate as their city's most critical needs during the first decade of this new century?

City Council members will receive a report Aug. 21 representing many hours of work by volunteers who have been meeting since early June to prioritize needs of the community in three areas: transportation, public safety and parks and recreation.

In early December city voters will be asked to approve a \$20 million bond package which will include projects in each of those three areas. City administrators over the years have worked with the Council and BA residents in putting together those bond elections about every four years to keep tax levels from increasing. The last bond election was 1997, with one before that in 1993.

The process of public input has been a key to not only the success of those bond issues in the past, but also the decisions on City needs. More than 100 residents gathered at Holiday Inn South on June 3 to begin that process, listing any projects they believed important to their neighborhoods in particular or the community in general.

After being provided with cost estimates of the projects and an overall "budget" for the three

areas of needs, committees began meeting late in June to establish the priorities that will be presented to the Council members Aug. 21.

“I doubt there is any greater example of how democracy works than city government at this level,” said Broken Arrow City Manager Michael Kadlecik. “It was truly exciting to see so many residents take the time on a weekend morning to participate in the Strategic Planning Meeting. The call came to participate, not to sit and watch. Now we have volunteers who are helping decide what the most important needs are for our community. When the proposals for the projects in that December bond issue go before the City Council in August, they will truly be representative of what the community feels we need most as we enter this 21st Century.”

Street improvements in the areas around the South Loop turnpike now under construction were high on the lists, as were public safety issues -- including a new fire station and public safety training center.

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City to have TV Channel

The City of Broken Arrow will be going “on air,” with a tentative beginning date of August 15. Viewers of Cox Communications Cable TV in Broken Arrow and in Coweta will be able to keep up with the latest news in the city over a public access channel.

While final details were still being worked out at press time, the channel will provide text and image presentations of interest to all residents.

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Reserve Officers bolster City’s Police force

They are not highly visible until they’re highly needed. Thankfully, in Broken Arrow, that’s not often.

But the men and women of the Broken Arrow Police Department will be the first to tell you that their Reserve Police Officers crew is important every week of every month.

The men and women who participate in the Reserve Officers program represent a wide range of ages (21 to mid 40s) and careers. They all have one thing in common, however: they appreciate the importance of law enforcement and they are willing to give of their own time and energy to help fill in some of the “gaps” in their community.

Earlier this spring BAPD Chief Carolyn Kusler attended one of the briefing sessions of the Reserve Officers and presented each with a certificate of that appreciation. She emphasized to them their importance to the Department in general and the community as a whole.

“There are times when there is simply too much going on for our full-time staff to handle adequately,” Kusler said. “During festivals such as Rooster Days, Glory Daze or emergency situations like the flooding we’ve experienced in some parts of the city, the availability of our Reserve Officers is invaluable to the Department.”

Officer Cary Aud, who coordinates the program, explained that each Reserve must complete a 120-hour Academy program. The next one starts in August and meets two nights each week.

Reserves must be 21 or older. They do not get paid, but they are fully commissioned. They may carry weapons on duty assignments, and they are assigned 75 hours each six months.

“The Broken Arrow Police Reserves can always be counted on to help when there is a need,” said Aud, who said there are seven members of the 29 on the squad who have been serving since he came to BA in 1984. “Lloyd Beeson, who is the Reserves Commander, has provided great leadership and direction to the Unit since he was elected to that position last November.

“They are always seeking training opportunities, and ways to improve their unit. I am proud to be associated with this group of men and women.”

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Community Pride program combines police, codes

In an effort to keep Broken Arrow a great place to raise a family -- and one of the state’s most beautiful cities -- the Broken Arrow Police Department has joined hands with the code enforcement division of the Inspections Department in “Operation Community Pride.”

When officers spot problems with code violations, such as yards full of trash, weeds, junk cars, etc., they will help notify home owners of those problems and work with code enforcement in being sure they are taken care of -- before neighbors try to take things into their own hands.

This is another example of community policing, which Chief Carolyn Kusler has emphasized since coming to Broken Arrow. Officers on patrol are given more time to work out trouble spots on their “beats,” trying to head off problems rather than react to them after the fact.

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City's \$97 million Budget Conservative, Innovative

The last time the City of Broken Arrow was linked to “the rest of the world” by a major highway project, a small town became a booming city. That was nearly four decades ago when the Broken Arrow Expressway opened.

Now, with the completion of the South Loop due in just over a year, this booming city is due to experience another growth spurt. Recognizing the realities of what it takes to be prepared for that growth, the Broken Arrow City Council this spring approved a budget of \$97,074,233 -- an increase of just over \$5 million from the previous fiscal year.

In working with City department heads throughout the budget process, City Manager Michael Kadlecik stressed the need to be conservative and to be “innovative.”

“We are living in a world which is changing more rapidly than ever due to technology,” said Kadlecik. “During the past several months the City of Broken Arrow has worked hard to put that technology to work to make this a better community in which to live. City employees are also learning how to use advances in technology to better deal with the growth in our residential, commercial and industrial areas.”

The 2000-2001 fiscal year budget, which went into effect July 1, includes operating funds of \$34,547,577; capital funding of \$40,209,496; debt service of \$8,008,169; and transfers of \$14,309,000.

Transfer appropriations are the governmental accounting procedures by which money is transferred from fund to fund to achieve policy objectives of the City (i.e., the sales tax revenues designated for Northeastern State University go into the General Fund, then are transferred to the NSU Bond Fund to pay the debt service).

Once again public safety was a primary concern in preparing the budget, with funding for two additional police officers and the initiation of a Community Service Officer Program which will free two more officers. The Fire Department has been increased by three firefighters, and two more sirens will be added to the City's storm warning system.

In one of those innovative measures, added emphasis will be placed on bolstering the inspection services of the City. “Building inspections and code enforcement are critical to the well being of the community,” Kadlecik explained. An HTE building inspections program will be activated and code enforcement will work hand-in-hand with the Police Department in Project Community Pride.

The budget presentation to City Council members also pointed out the importance of maintaining the multi-million dollar investment in streets, sewers, water lines, parks and public buildings. That

includes funding for street repairs and resurfacing, sidewalk construction, sewer drainage upgrading and maintenance of facilities.

One of the City departments which has been hard-pressed to keep up with the demands of a fast-growing community is the planning department, which combines with the engineering department to work with developers of all types of construction. Additional staffing for those departments should help make development a less painful experience and ensure a community built around a plan for even greater quality of life.

Examples of some of the innovative and cost-reduction efforts by the City include:



1. Use of the Broken Arrow Public Schools print shop to reduce costs



2. A "train the trainer" program for employee safety



3. Implementation of a Central File system to save research time and space



4. Increased use of the City Website for posting of City Council and Planning Commission agendas,



annotated agendas and minutes

5. Extra court dockets to reduce waiting time



6. Addition of Community Service Officers to free sworn officers for patrol



7. Outsourced Workers Compensation Program reducing payroll costs



8. Increased use of technology in billing and filing



9. Recycling old sanitation trucks into low-use equipment, such as water trucks



10. Use of HDPE pipe for storm sewers, reducing costs by 50 percent



11. Vehicle preventive maintenance program reduced down time and extended life



12. Establishing night utility crew speeds response and reduces employee burnout



The budget also includes a 10 percent increase in funding for Broken Arrow Seniors, Inc., and a 66 percent increase in funding for Youth Services of Tulsa (which still does not cover costs). A Horticulture/Forestry Division was created and an expanded staff of lifeguards was approved to better handle the new Family Aquatic Center.

A more detailed look at the budget can be viewed through the City's Website (www.city.broken-arrow.ok.us).



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Action Center provides shortcut to get things done

Has it gotten to the point where a problem with weeds, junk cars or trash is bothering you worse than mosquitoes? Or are the mosquitoes by themselves enough to make you want to call someone for help?

The City of Broken Arrow has long realized that there are some problems that its residents need help on...help in the form of quick action.

By calling the Action Center (258-3587, or email Action@city.broken-arrow.ok.us) you can report your problem and have it channeled to the right person. You'll even get a letter stating help is on the way. Be sure and leave your name and address and phone number.

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